of meeting the growing needs of the traffic. Nevertheless, an outlay of Rs. 2984 crores has been provided in 8th Five Year Plan 1992—97 for increasing the existing cargo handling capacity of the Major Ports to 237 million tonnes.

Delinking of Vadinar Port from Kandla port limit

5603. SHRIMATI ANANDIBEN JETHABHAI PATEL; Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state;

(a) whether the Gujarat Government has approached the Government of India to delink the Vadinar Port, excluding the Oil terminal, from the Kandla Port limit, so as to develop it as a State Port for handling dry cargo;

(b) whether Government would accede to the request of the State Government;

(c) if so, by when; and

(d) if 'not, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPCIRT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The request of the State Government has not been acceded to.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Due to the buoyant trend in oil traffic, the oil terminal at Vadinar is proposed to be expanded. The unutilised land area is required by the Kandla Port Trust for creating secondary facilties like godowns, oil storage towers etc., to cater to the increased, traffic consequent to the expansion. Therefore, it is not possible to 'delink Vadinar from Handia Port.

Construction of contaner terminal at Vallarpadam

5604. SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

a) whether Government have taken any[1] initiative to construct the container terminal at Vallarpadam of Cochin fort; and

(b) if *no,* the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) and (b) Global offers from private parties were invited by Cochin Port for establishment of container Transhipment Terminal at Vallarpadam. The response received in this regard has not been adequate

Woork on the National Highway No. 17

5605. SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether work on the NH—17 from Ponnani to Ernakulam has still not been completed; and

(b) if so, by when the work on NH—17 would be completed in the above area, especially from N. Parui to Ernakulam?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER); (a) Various sanctioned works of improvement from Ponnani to Ernakulam on NH-17 are in different stages of progress.

(b) It is too early to indicate the date of ompletion of the improvement wortks including the section between Worth Parur to Ernakulam on NH-17.

Basic price of descl and petrol for central road fund

5606. DR. BAPU KALDATE: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that S per cent of tie basic price of diesel and